

COVID-19 Weekly Update

3 December



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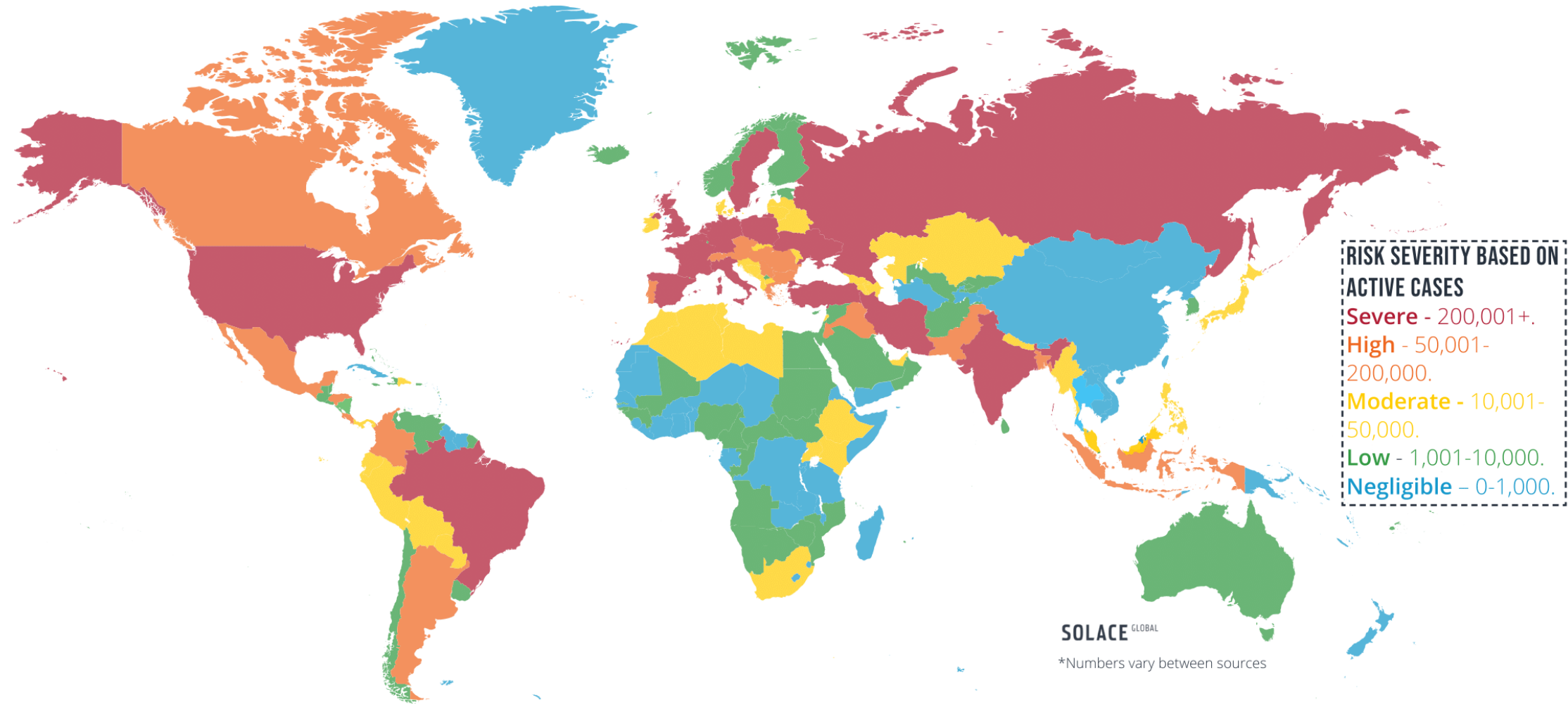


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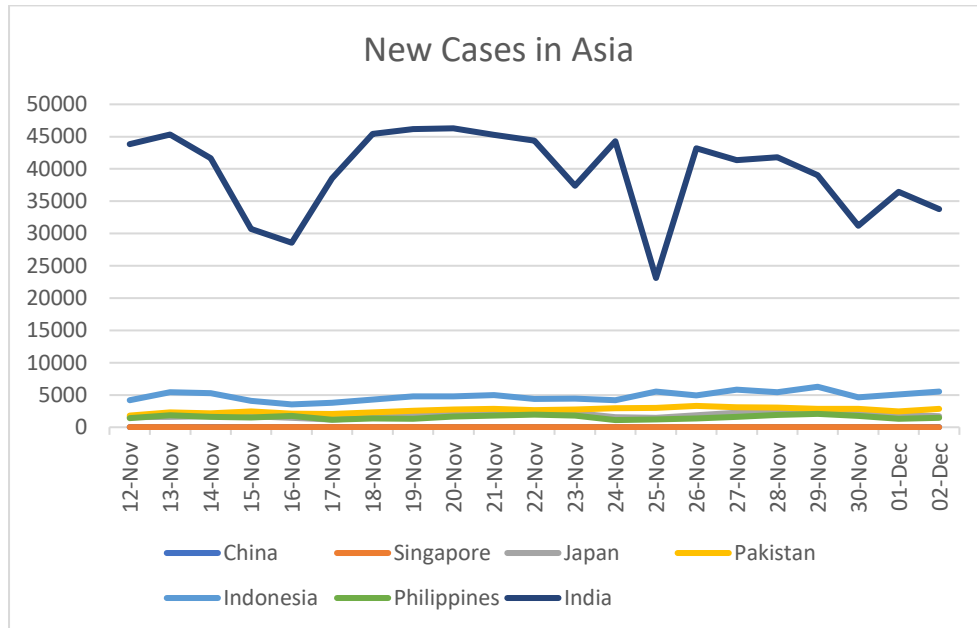
Current Statistics (Numbers vary between sources)

Total cases	64,823,699	Total Active Cases	18,398,178	Total Confirmed Recoveries	44,927,152	Total Confirmed Deaths	1,498,369
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Asia



Across the continent, countries that kept the disease under control are now recording an uptick in cases. Indeed, the Western Pacific region reported a 12 per cent increase in new weekly cases up to 29 November, continuing the upwards trend that began earlier in the month. Despite the increase, India’s COVID-19 caseload continues to represent over half of the continent’s total number, with 9.5 million cases out of 16.9 million as of 2 December.

After infection rates in South Korea soared to levels not matched since the earliest stage of the pandemic, authorities are considering tightening restrictions once again. Daily new cases recorded last week reached over 500 for three days in a row, before dropping to 450 on Sunday. Renewed control measures could see tighter social distancing guidelines as well as restrictions on economic activity.

A second wave of the disease has also been registered in Pakistan where daily new infections have crossed the 3,000 mark for several consecutive days over the past week. Additionally, Punjab province has overtaken Sindh in the number of recorded fatalities. The situation has

deemed to be severe by authorities as hospitals nationwide are overstretched and some are allegedly turning away patients. In response to the uptick in cases, COVID-19 measures have tightened nationwide including restrictions on gatherings.

To the east, as the number of confirmed cases continue to rise nationwide, Bangladesh plans to step up the measures to stop the spread of the disease. Despite this, authorities have stated that a renewed full lockdown is unlikely at this time.

Cases are also surging in Nepal where cases have exceeded 230,000. To revive trade with neighbouring India, the two countries are reportedly exploring the possibility of an air bubble.

In India, cases seem to have flattened significantly. On Sunday, 29 November, authorities reported that approximately 22 states have COVID-19 fatality rates lower than the national average. Despite this, the nation’s capital New Delhi has reported a significant spike over the weekend. International flights will remain suspended until at least January 2021.

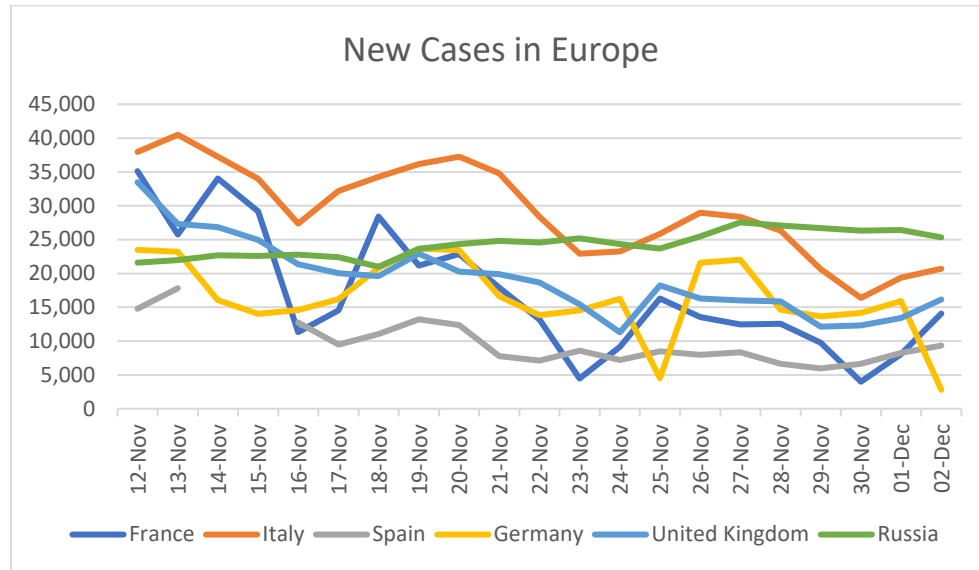
Similarly, Hong Kong has declared a fourth wave of the disease, which had reportedly originated from a ballroom dancing venue. This forced the suspension of the travel bubble with Singapore and led to stricter social distancing rules.

Finally, in Sri Lanka, cases have surpassed the 20,000 mark but the second wave of the disease seems to have passed. Following a recent decline in new daily cases, some measures, including in the capital Colombo, have been lifted; although, face masks remain mandatory in public places.

Countries	Active Covid Cases	Active Case Number Change	Domestic Lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
India	424,710	Significant Decrease	Moderate	High
Pakistan	49,780	Increase	Moderate	High
China	268	Stable	Light	High
Japan	20,910	Increase	Light	High
Indonesia	73,429	Increase	Moderate	High
Singapore	57	Stable	Light	High
Philippines	26,919	Stable	Moderate	High



Europe



In Europe, 60 million cases have been registered since the beginning of the pandemic. The continent is, however, witnessing a small decrease in the number of daily infections. Whilst some countries in the continent are slowly relaxing their restrictions, others are planning to keep strict rules in place for the Christmas and New Year period. This is due to the fear that a return to normal life during the winter holidays will lead to a surge in cases, similar to that witnessed earlier in the summer.

European governments also remain divided over allowing skiing holidays, with countries such as Italy and Germany asking for slopes to be closed down over the Christmas period. On the contrary, Austria and Switzerland are reluctant to restrict skiing holidays due to the detrimental effect this will have on their economies.

In Germany, the partial lockdown is expected to end on 23 December, however, limits on gatherings will remain in effect. Restrictions of some form are likely to remain in place into 2021, however. Whilst Germany managed to restrict case numbers in the early stages of the pandemic, the country is now seeing one of the highest rates of new cases per day, only

behind Russia and Italy. This may, in part be down to increased testing, but demonstrates the ongoing threat facing all European countries as they await the arrival of vaccines.

To the south, parts of Italy are reporting a steady decrease in infections. Although it is too early to say, authorities believe that if rates continue to drop at this rate, all the regions will be out of the red zone list by the end of the month. Despite this, travel between regions is set to remain banned throughout Christmas to prevent a third wave of the infection. Additionally, a set of relaxed measures is likely to be announced next week. For example, non-essential shops will likely reopen to allow shopping in the days leading up to 25 December.

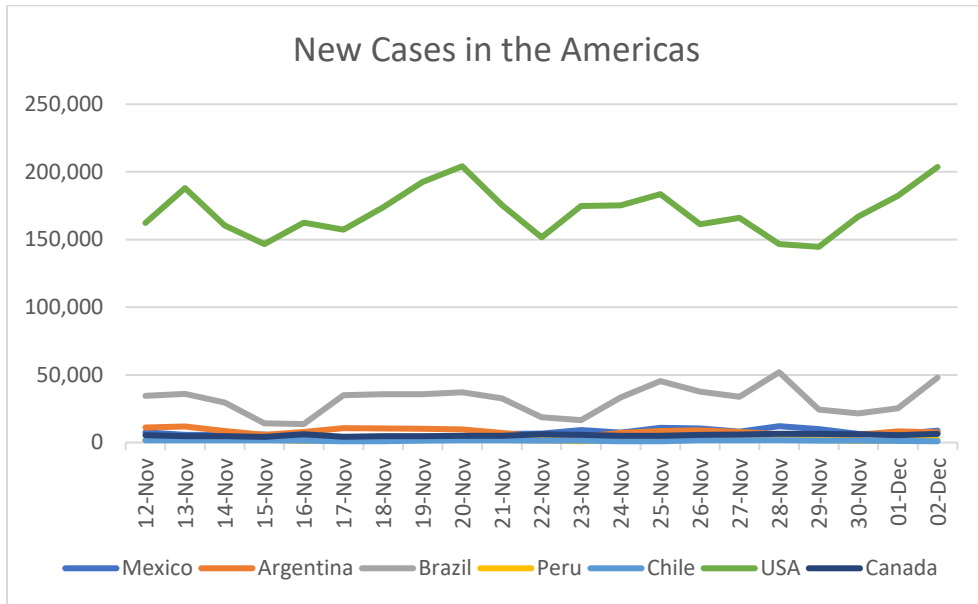
In the UK, the government has announced that the Pfizer vaccine had been approved for use in the country. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has also revealed that the country's new tiered system of COVID-19 restrictions would be reviewed every two weeks and would have "a sunset of 3 February," indicating that the measures are to last until well after New Year.

Finally, in Serbia, there has been a steady rise in the number of weekly cases and deaths since October. According to WHO statistics, authorities recorded just under 47,000 new cases and 300 deaths in the week up to 29 November. As a result of the increasing number of patients, the country's healthcare is reported to be on the verge of collapse, prompting authorities in Belgrade to hastily construct two temporary hospitals. One of the new hospitals is expected to be ready to receive COVID-19 patients in the coming days.

Countries	Active Covid Cases	Active Case Number Change	Domestic Lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
France	2,025,256	Increase	High	Moderate
Italy	761,230	Stable but High	High	Moderate
Spain	N/A	Stable but High	High	Moderate
Germany	308,520	Stable but High	High	Moderate
UK	N/A	Stable but High	High	Moderate
Russia	475,999	Stable but High	Moderate	High



Americas



The Americas recorded approximately 1.7 million new cases in the past 7 days. The United States continues to be the worst-affected nation and has reported a significant increase in the numbers of new cases, exceeding 150,000 almost every day in the past week. The US caseload, when combined with those of Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and Argentina, represents roughly 93 per cent of all COVID-19 cases across the Americas. As a result, in the United States, cases have now surpassed 14 million.

It is now feared that the Christmas holiday will lead to a further increase in cases and possibly, overwhelm the healthcare system. In Los Angeles, stricter measures have been announced including stay-at-home orders and bans on social gatherings. These have been in effect since Monday, 30 November and they will be in place for at least three weeks. Hospitalisations in Los Angeles county, the most populous county in the US, have doubled over the last two weeks.

Infections also continue to rise in Brazil. Most recently, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro

expressed criticism towards the vaccination programmes and stated that he will not take a COVID-19 vaccine when this becomes widely available. Moreover, he implied that the nation will not force Brazilians to get vaccinated. Observers now fear that his latest comment might influence the negotiations between vaccine developers and the government. Over the last week, the health records of millions of COVID-19 patients in Brazil has been leaked online after a hospital employee uploaded a spreadsheet with sensitive details.

Elsewhere, Johnny Briceño the newly elected prime minister of Belize announced new measures to control the spread of the disease. From 29 November, a curfew has been in effect from 21:00 through to 05:00 local time and it will be enforced for at least two weeks.

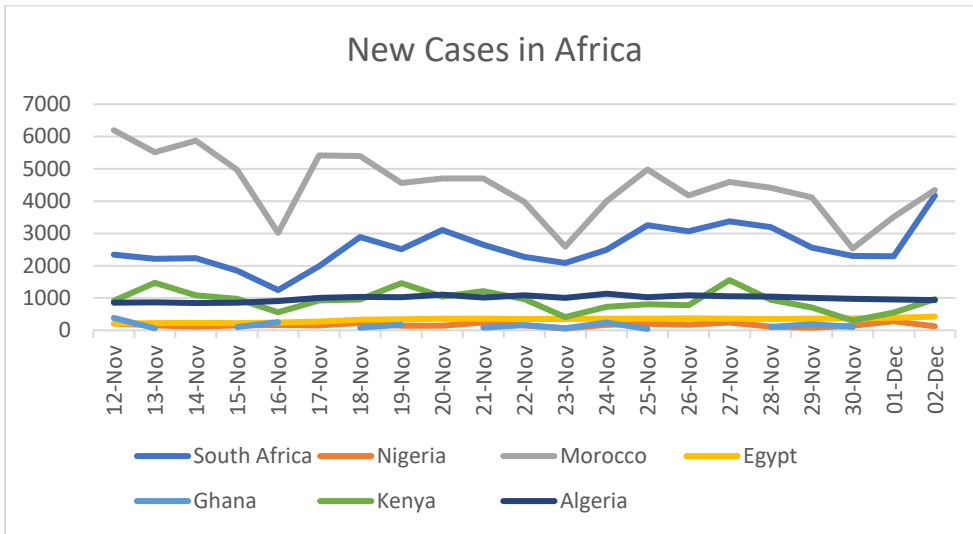
The Peruvian Ministry of Health announced that the country has secured enough vaccine from developer Pfizer Inc for at least three-quarters of its population. On the same day, due to a decline in cases over several consecutive days, authorities eased the curfew hours. The state of health emergency will remain in place until transmissions stop.

Finally, despite concerns over the disease, tens of thousands of Argentinians defied the restrictions and gathered in Buenos Aires on Thursday, 26 November, to see the casket of soccer star Diego Maradona who died of a heart attack on the previous day. There were also reports of clashes in the capital after public viewing of the coffin was cut short for an early burial. The unrest resulted in police deploying crowd dispersal methods.

Countries	Active Covid Cases	Active Case Number Change	Domestic Lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
Mexico	185,780	Increase	Light	Moderate
Argentina	132,589	Stable	High	High
Brazil	563,766	Increase	Light	High
Peru	31,786	Decrease	Moderate	High
Chile	8,959	Stable	Light	High
USA	5,571,964	Significant Increase	Moderate	Moderate
Canada	67,564	Increase	Moderate	High



Africa



Africa saw a relatively small increase in both cases and deaths in the past week, recording approximately 50,000 new cases, marking a three per cent rise on the previous week, according to the latest WHO report. Despite the small uptick, the continent’s weekly tally only represented one per cent of global COVID-19 cases reported during the period. Moreover, Africa’s cumulative cases, now standing at over 2.2 million, represent just three percent of the global tally.

South Africa continues to be Africa’s worst-affected nation in terms of both cumulative COVID-19 cases and deaths, with over 795,000 and 21,500 respectively. The country has reported a slight uptick in new cases in the past week, with health authorities reporting over 3,000 daily cases on three occasions. While such case numbers are far lower than those reported during the July peak, national and local health authorities were said to be considering a number of restrictions, including limitations on how and where alcohol may be sold, as well as adjusting the nationwide curfew time.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has said that disruptions caused by the pandemic have significantly impacted the delivery of health services and funding to combat other

prevalent health threats in Africa, specifically malaria and HIV. Indeed, the WHO warned that there could be an excess of malaria deaths of between 10,000-20,000 in sub-Saharan Africa – most of them young children and babies – due to the impact COVID-19 has had on medical service provision.

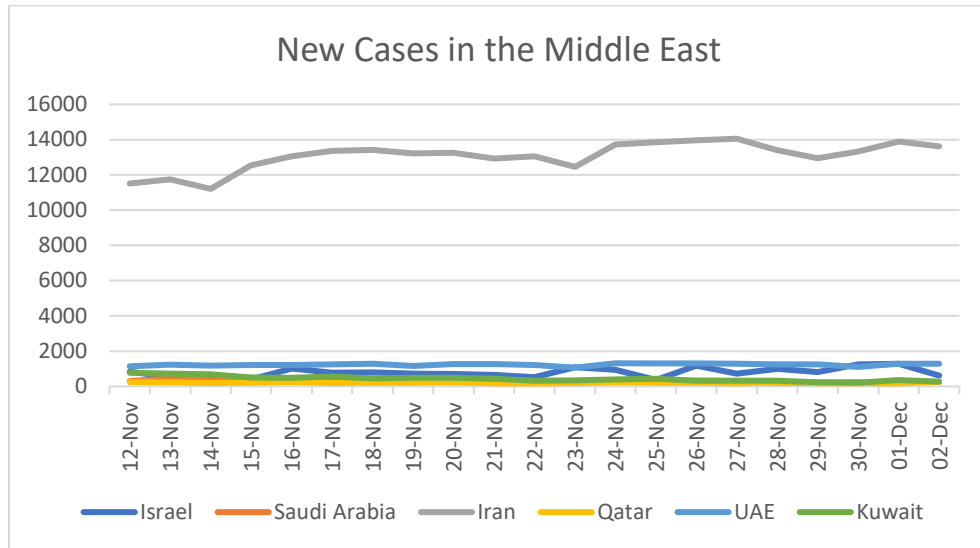
Similarly, there is concern that efforts to bring HIV infection rates down in many African nations could be undone, or at least setback, due to COVID-19-related disruptions to health and support services. Moreover, other factors such as an increase in sexual violence and overstretched resources/funding have been cited as causes for concern for African countries that had previously made great strides in combating HIV.

In more positive news, on 29 November Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni announced via social media that scientists had developed a number of medications, including three anti-viral drugs, and diagnostic tests. The president’s remarks come amid reports the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) partnered with Imperial College London is to start the first COVID-19 vaccine trial in the country before end of the year.

Countries	Active Covid Cases	Active Case Number Change	Domestic Lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
South Africa	40,458	Stable	Moderate	High
Nigeria	2,944	Stable	Moderate	High
Morocco	43,968	Stable	Moderate	High
Egypt	7,081	Stable	Moderate	High
Ghana	797	Decrease	Moderate	High
Kenya	27,182	Slight increase	Moderate	High
Algeria	27,630	Stable	Moderate	High



Middle East



Countries across the Middle East, for the most part, continue to report fairly steady numbers of both weekly cases and deaths. That said, beginning in early October Iran suffered an exponential rise in daily case numbers, levelling out in the past week at around 13,000 per day. Meanwhile, Qatar and Bahrain continue to have among the highest incidence rate, both with around 50,000 total cases per one million population.

Iran continues to be the Middle East’s worst-affected nation, with November marking the country’s deadliest month since the pandemic began. In the past month, over 10,000 people died of COVID-19, representing nearly a quarter of the country’s cumulative deaths. Due to the uptick in cases, authorities had imposed new measures, including closing non-essential businesses, travel bans and a nightly curfew, until further notice.

As cases continued to rise in the West Bank, authorities on 27 November imposed a weekend lockdown in an effort to curb the spread of the virus. Additionally, the Palestinian Authority (PA) has also implemented a 14-day partial lockdown, which will see travel prohibited on weekends, as well as between 19:00 and 06:00 on weekdays in and between all the governorates; only essential shops, such as pharmacies, will remain open.

Meanwhile in Gaza, health authorities have warned that the territory’s medical system is struggling to cope with the number of COVID-19 cases due to facilities being overwhelmed and limited medical supplies.

Millions of students have gone back to school in Iraq for the first time since the start of country’s national lockdown in February. Like many other countries across the world, authorities decided to close schools in an effort to limit the spread of the virus. However, Iraq’s schools will now open six days a week in order to allow appropriate social distancing, with students expected to attend either one or two days per week, depending on their age. While the move has been hailed by the UNHCR due to the impact the pandemic has had on education, it was reported that Iraq’s Parliamentary Health and Environment Committee had previously disapproved of the reopening.

Saudi Arabia is set to announce a lifting of COVID-19-related restrictions on citizens and residents travelling to and from the Kingdom and allowing the opening of ports to all means of transport. When the restrictions were put in place, the kingdom stated that there would be 30 days between any announcement of the lifting of measures and the actual relaxation. As such, it is likely that the Saudi government will announce a date in early January for the resumption of travel.

Countries	Active Covid Cases	Active Case Number Change	Domestic Lockdown	International Travel Restrictions
Israel	11,476	Slight Increase	High	High
Saudi Arabia	4,440	Decrease	Light	High
Iran	252,528	Increase	Moderate	High
Qatar	2,504	Stable	Moderate	High
UAE	14,474	Increase	Light	Moderate
Kuwait	4,244	Decrease	Moderate	Moderate